

Message Text

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43/47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

ACDA-07 SAJ-01 /080 W

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P R 111351Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4179

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

DIA WASHDC

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJECT: REACTION TO DEMIREL AP INTERVIEW

REF: ANKARA 3681

1. PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL'S MAY 9 AP INTERVIEW WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN THE GREEK PRESS MAY 10-11. FOCUS OF SPECIAL CONCERN WAS DEMIREL'S REMARKS--AS INITIALLY REPORTED (BEFORE SUBSEQUENT CORRECTION)--THAT TURKEY COULD HAVE OCCUPIED ALL OF CYPRUS AND STILL MAINTAINS THAT CAPABILITY. VRANDYNI (CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVT) MAY 10 FEATURED THOSE REMARKS AS ITS MAIN FIRST PAGE STORY UNDER HEADLINE "DEMIREL THREATENS TO OCCUPY ALL OF CYPRUS." OTHER AFTERNOON PAPERS AFFORDED STORY SIGNIFICANT COVERAGE ON BACK PAGES. A REPRESENTATIVE HEADLINE FOLLOWS: APOYEVMATINI (CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVT), "DEMIREL WAR-LIKE AGAIN; HE THREATENS GREECE AND CYPRUS."

2. THE SUBSEQUENT CORRECTION OF DEMIREL'S STATEMENTS BY TURKISH MFA SPOKESMAN AKBIL'S CLARIFICATION MAY 10 WAS REFLECTED IN THE NEWS REPORTING OF THE TUESDAY MAY 11,
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PRESS. HOWEVER, A FEW EDITORIALS WHICH WERE PREPARED ON THE

BASIS OF DEMIRELS STATEMENT AS REPORTED EARLIER DID APPEAR AND WERE PREDICTABLY CRITICAL. A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS IS KATHIMERINI (PRO-GOVT) WHICH PRINTS NEWS STORY ON FIRST PAGE UNDER HEADLINE "ANKARA NOW OFFICIALLY SAYS THAT TURKEY NEVER INTENDED TO OCCUPY ALL OF CYPRUS," WHILE AN INSIDE EDITORIAL CASTIGATES DEMIREL FOR HIS STATEMENT AS ORIGINALLY REPORTED STATING INTER ALIA THAT THE TURKISH INTENTION IS TO ASSURE THE PRESERVATION OF THE CURRENT FAITS ACCOMPLIS ON CYPRUS AS A FIRST STAGE IN AN OVERALL PLAN OF "TURKIFYING" THE ENTIRE ISLAND.

3. WHILE THE GOG HAS NOT SPECIFICALLY COMMENTED ON THE DISPUTED DEMIREL STATEMENT AS IT RELATES TO CYPRUS, IT NEVERTHELESS HAD COMMENTED ON DEMIRELS REMARKS IN THE SAME AP INTERVIEW TO THE EFFECT THAT THE GREEK AND TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTERS WOULD MEET IN OSLO DURING THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING LATER THIS MONTH. A GREEK GOVERNMENT SOURCE MAY 10 SAID THAT NO SPECIAL MEETING HAS BEEN PLANNED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING CYPRUS AND GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT SOURCE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT BOTH MINISTERS (BITSIOS AND CAGLAYANGIL) WOULD ATTEND THE NATO MEETING IN OSLO, AND THAT IT WOULD BE "NATURAL FOR THEM TO EXCHANGE VIEWS." THE SOURCE CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT "SPECIAL PREPARATIONS" WOULD BE MADE FOR THIS PURPOSE. KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ATHENS04539
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760181-0959
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760570/aaaachpj.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ANKARA 3681
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <04 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO DEMIREL AP INTERVIEW
TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU, (DEMIREL, SULEYMAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006